

Status of Report: Public

Meeting: Combined Fire Authority

Date: 10 February 2021

Subject: Day Crewing Plus Duty System

Report by: Callum Faint – Chief Fire and Rescue Officer

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For: Information and Decision

Purpose

1. The purpose of this report is to update the Combined Fire Authority (CFA) on the progress made regarding the identification of an alternative duty system following the decision taken at its meeting on 29 July 2020 to move away from the current Day Crewing Plus (DCP) system in preparedness for the next Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) 2024.

Recommendation

2. The CFA is requested to:
 - a) Note progress made to identify an alternative duty system following the decision taken at its meeting on 29 July 2020 to move away from Day Crewing Plus in preparedness for the next IRMP 2024; and
 - b) Agree to receive further updates on DCP on a six-monthly basis in September and February each year.

Executive Summary

3. Day Crewing Plus is a shift system that is operated on six fire stations within Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service. The DCP system sits outside of the nationally agreed systems and officers have not been able to agree a local collective agreement with representative bodies.
4. Due to these factors there is a possibility that DCP, if not removed, may be subject to a legal challenge.
5. The Combined Fire Authority considered an exempt report on Day Crewing Plus at its meeting on 29 July 2020 and agreed that:
 - a) *“the LFRS proposal to move away from the current DCP crewing system in preparedness for the next IRMP 2024 be approved”*; and
 - b) *“that alternative options to replace the current DCP duty system, via an officer group working party of relevant stakeholder representatives, be developed.”*

Background

6. The Service has established a Shift Working Group comprising of Officers, Fire Brigades Union and the Fire Officers Association and this met on 22 January 2021 and established the terms of reference, a copy of which is appended to this report. This will ensure that staff and representative bodies are involved in the process and able to make recommendations for any new future provision at an early stage.
7. The Shift Working Group's aim is to review all relevant data to understand the impact of moving away from DCP and with this data in mind, create a number of recommendations of what other systems or shifts could be put in place to ensure a suitable level of fire cover is maintained within the budgetary constraints of the Authority.
8. It should be noted that the Shift Working Group will make recommendations to the Senior Management Team. Any recommendations that are pursued will be done through the formal negotiation stage via the existing route of the Staff Consultation Forum and in line with the National Joint Committee (NJC) protocols prior to presentation to the CFA.
9. The Shift Working Group has acknowledged that communication is key to all staff and will therefore provide regular updates, notifying them of the timescales and intentions in order for those individuals affected to make an informed decision.
10. At its meeting in February 2020, the CFA requested that a report be presented to each CFA meeting to provide and update on the current position with DCP. As this issue has moved forward significantly since that time, it is recommended that the CFA consider reducing these reporting requirements to a 6-monthly basis to enable the group to review tangible options.
11. Legal (including crime and disorder)

The legal issues in relation to the DCP system have been covered in earlier reports to the CFA and are not therefore repeated here. The progress outlined in this report reduces the risk of challenge from the representative bodies and enforcement by the Health and Safety Executive.

12. Financial (including value for money, benefits and efficiencies)

There is no financial risk arising from this report. However, any agreed alternative duty system may place pressure on the current budget which remains both vulnerable from the impacts of Covid-19 and the single year financial settlement from Government.

13. Risk (including corporate and operational, health and safety and any impact on the continuity of Service delivery)

There is no risk arising directly from this report. The risk of litigation by the Fire Brigades Union has been mitigated following the CFA's decision at its meeting on 29 July 2020 to move away from the current DCP system.

14. Staff, Service Users and Stakeholders (including the Equality Impact Assessment)

There is no staff risk arising directly from this report. Any proposed change will need to be consulted upon with staff as there will be a need to change contracts of employment.

The decision to move away from DCP in preparedness for the next IRMP 2024, does allow those staff undertaking DCP some certainty over the next few years allowing them to consider future implications.

15. Environmental

There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

16. Impact upon "Our Plan" Objectives

There is no impact on the objectives in 'Our Plan' arising from this report. Changes to the duty systems may have implications to the fire cover provisions and will need to be subject to future public consultation. Due to the nature of any future proposals it is not yet possible to define the long-term implications.

Background Papers

CFA meeting 16 December 2020 Agenda item – Day Crewing Plus Duty System
<https://leics-fire.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/11-cfa-day-crewing-plus-duty-system-update-16-december-2020-final.pdf>

Appendix

Shift Working Group - Terms of Reference

Officers to Contact

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